



The President's Daily Brief

16 October 1970

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FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF

16 October 1970

PRINCIPAL DEVELOPMENTS

On Page 1 we comment on Hanoi's rejection of the President's peace proposals.

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NORTH VIETNAM

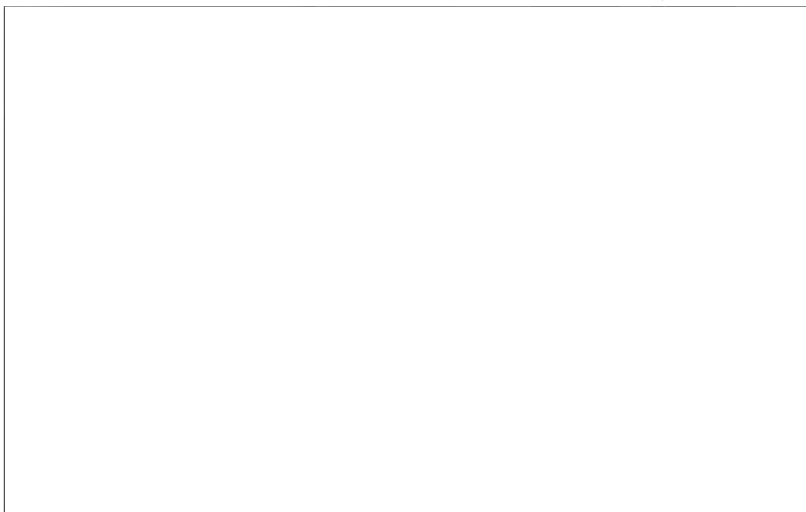
The "categorical" rejection of the President's peace proposals by the Vietnamese Communists in a foreign ministry statement from Hanoi on 14 October, and at the Paris talks yesterday, suggests that they see little opportunity for fruitful negotiations at present. The Communists have had a week to reflect on the proposals, and their statements clearly represent a considered judgment that there is more to be gained for the moment by adopting a firm rather than a flexible public stance and by sticking with the Viet Cong's tough eight-point proposal.

Hanoi charged that the President's proposals were "vague" on the key issues of troop withdrawal and the shape of a post-war political structure in the South. The Communists probably would like the US to elaborate on these two points in private talks. In this case, they might tailor their future diplomatic and political tactics to whatever the US may say about these matters. Any discussions of this kind would go very slowly at best, especially if the Communists believe they can improve their military position as US troops withdraw during the coming months.

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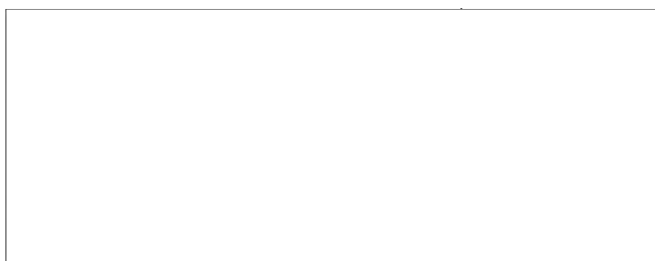
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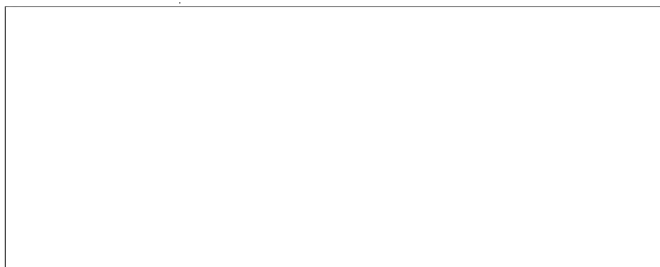
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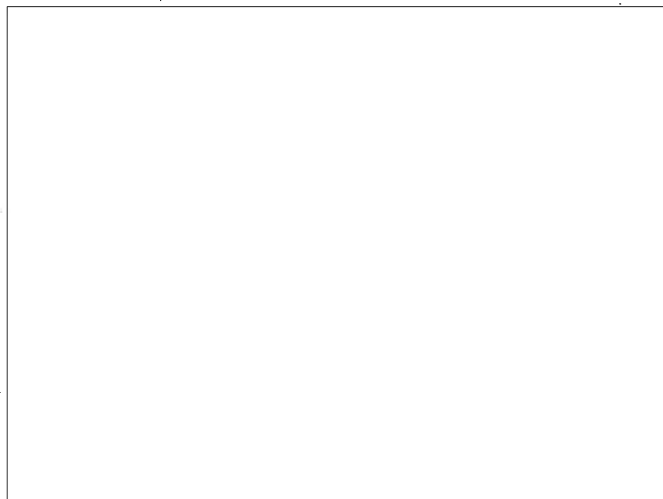
SOUTH VIETNAM



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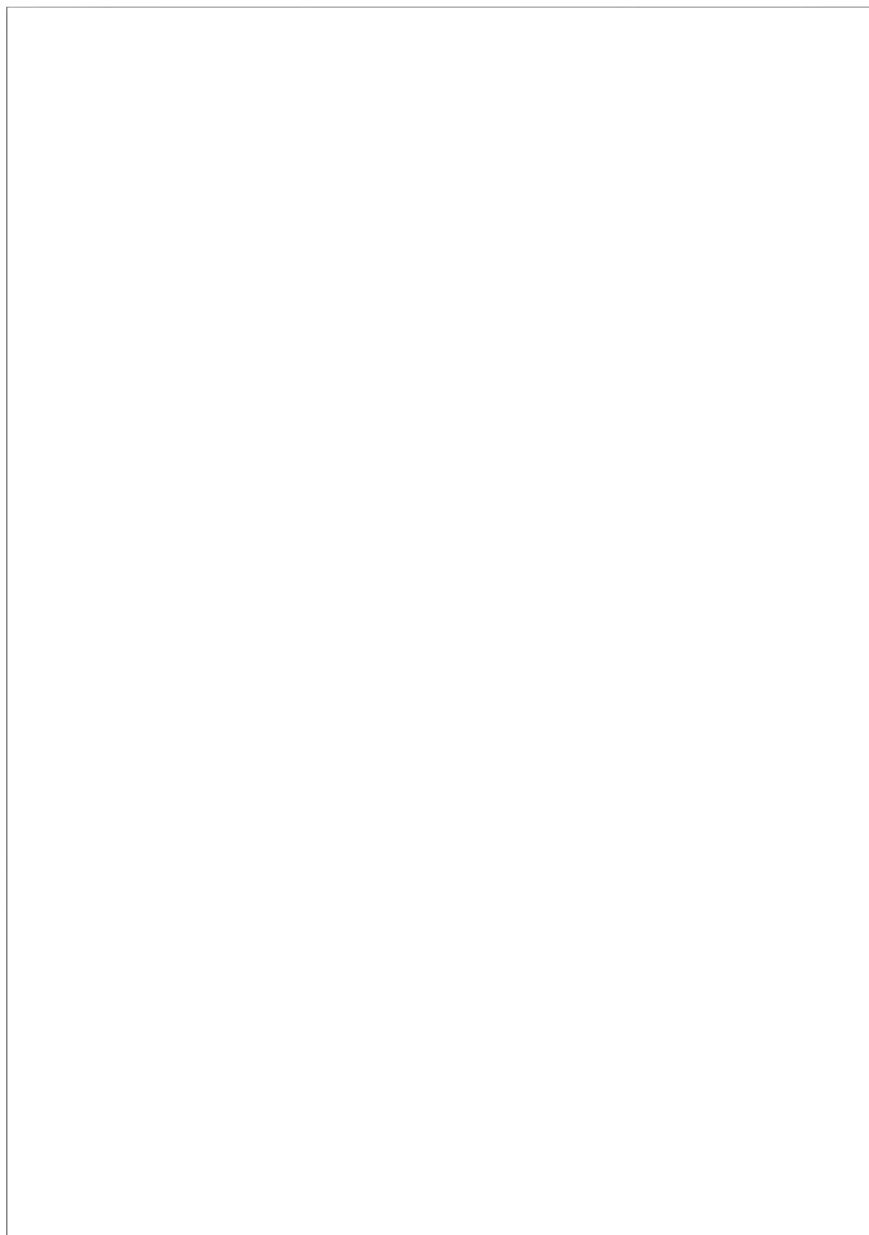


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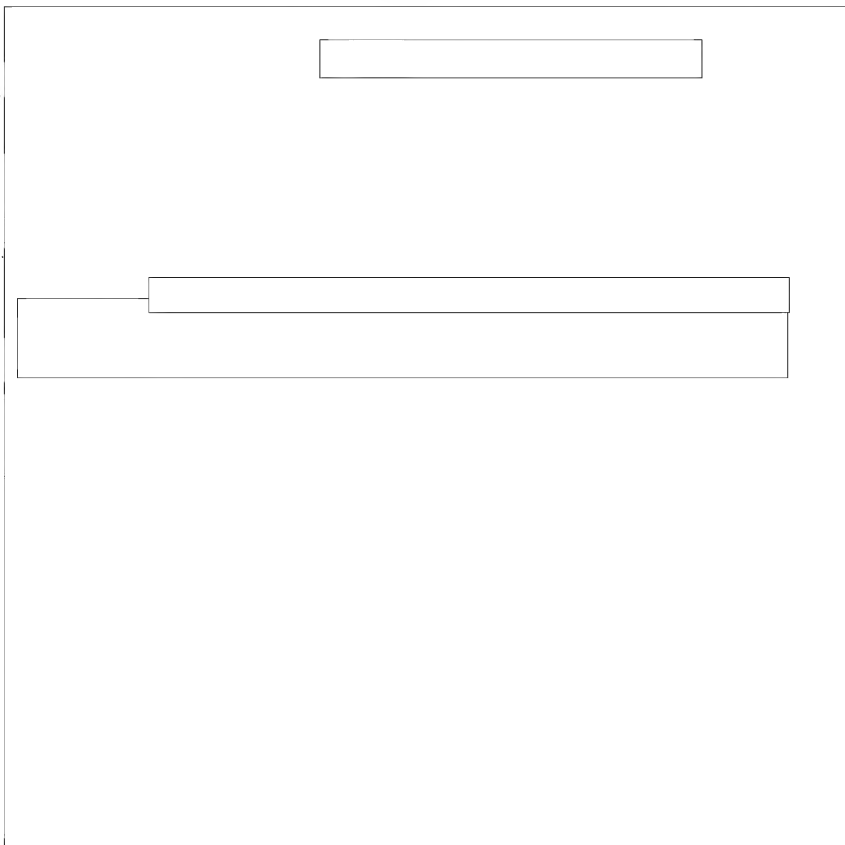


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NOTES

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Laos: In an intercepted message of 14 October, the senior Communist logistic authority in the Lao-tian panhandle informed a subordinate unit responsible for supply activity that as many as 100 vehicles would move during the period 14 through 18 October. This development confirms earlier indications that supply movements in the central panhandle are scheduled to begin in mid-October, about a month earlier than last year.

Cambodia: Elements of two Cambodian Army battalions clashed yesterday with a Communist force about 20 miles south of Phnom Penh, sustaining only light casualties. The government troops were part of the 6,000-man operation clearing Routes 2 and 3 south of the capital. The enemy troops may have been from the North Vietnamese 1st Division located nearby. The government operation is scheduled to end today.

Japan: Prime Minister Sato yesterday made the long-expected formal announcement that he will seek another two-year term as party president, and therefore his fourth consecutive term as prime minister. He faces only token opposition at the Liberal Democratic Party election on 29 October.

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party opposition to Finance Minister Fukuda, his choice for a successor, was apparently a major reason for his decision to remain in office. He might, however, step down before his new term expires if a suitable candidate could be found to carry on his brand of conservative policies.

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